

BRFSS Brief

Number 0908

The Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System (BRFSS) is an annual statewide telephone survey of adults developed by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention and administered by the New York State Department of Health. The BRFSS is designed to provide information on behaviors, risk factors, and utilization of preventive services related to the leading causes of chronic and infectious diseases, disability, injury, and death among the noninstitutionalized, civilian population aged 18 years and older.

Disability

New York State Adults 2007

Introduction

Disability due to physical, mental, or emotional problems is a major public health problem, reducing or lowering quality of life and increasing utilization of the health-care system. Disabilities are more common among the elderly and populations of lower socioeconomic status. As the number of people living with disabilities increases, maintaining quality of life for people with disabilities becomes even more challenging. The aging of the state's population, and associated disease and disability, have implications for the utilization of medical care and the need for

supportive and long-term care. In the mid-1980s, there were about 28 million people in the United States aged 65 years and older. The U.S. Bureau of the Census has predicted over twice as many people, 59 million, by the year 2025 in this age group. In New York State, 2000 Census figures show nearly 2.4 million residents are 65 years or older. By the year 2025, this total is projected to increase by nearly one-third to over 3.2 million. Monitoring the burden of disability on this aging population is essential.

BRFSS Questions

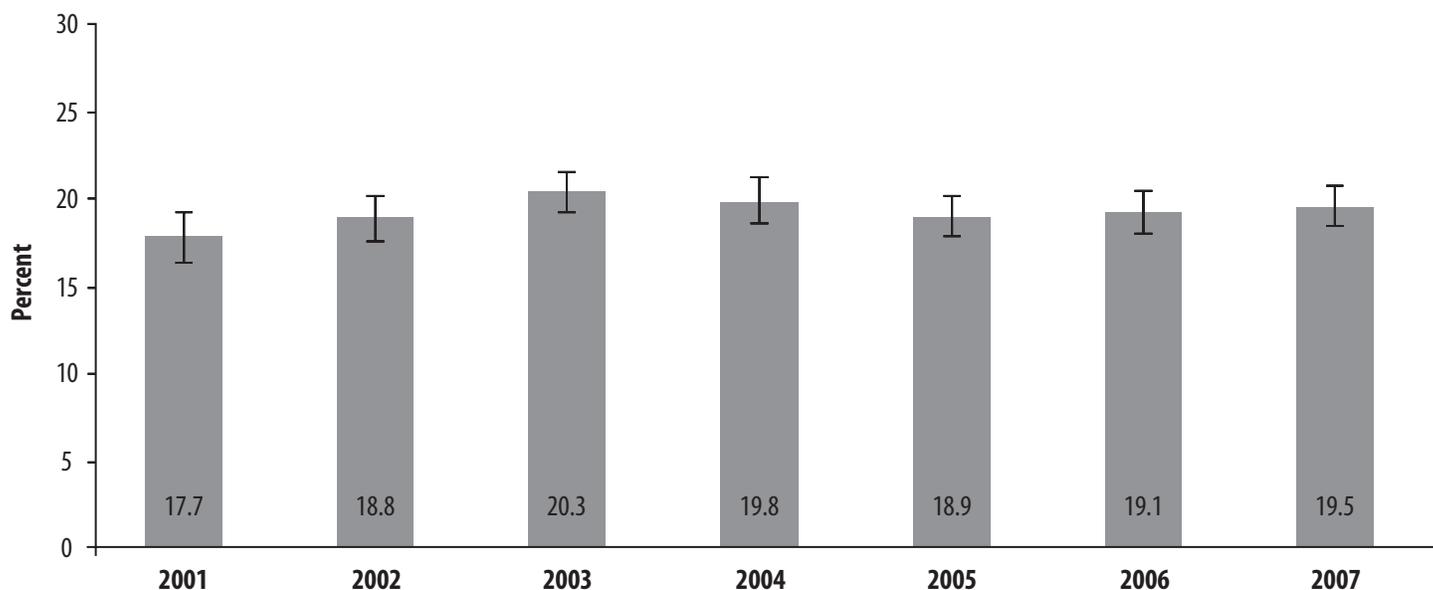
The following questions are about health problems or impairments you may have.

1. Are you limited in any way in any activities because of physical, mental, or emotional problems?
2. Do you now have any health problem that requires you to use special equipment, such as a cane, a wheelchair, a special bed, or a special telephone?
[If "yes" to either]
3. Because of any impairment or health problem, do you need the help of other persons with your personal care needs, such as eating, bathing, dressing, or getting around the house?

4. Because of any impairment or health problem, do you need the help of other persons in handling your routine needs, such as everyday household chores, doing necessary business, shopping, or getting around for other purposes?

Disability is defined as a "yes" response to either question #1 or #2. Responses to questions #3 and #4 identify the degree of disability, i.e., whether the person with a disability needs help in performing activities of daily living.

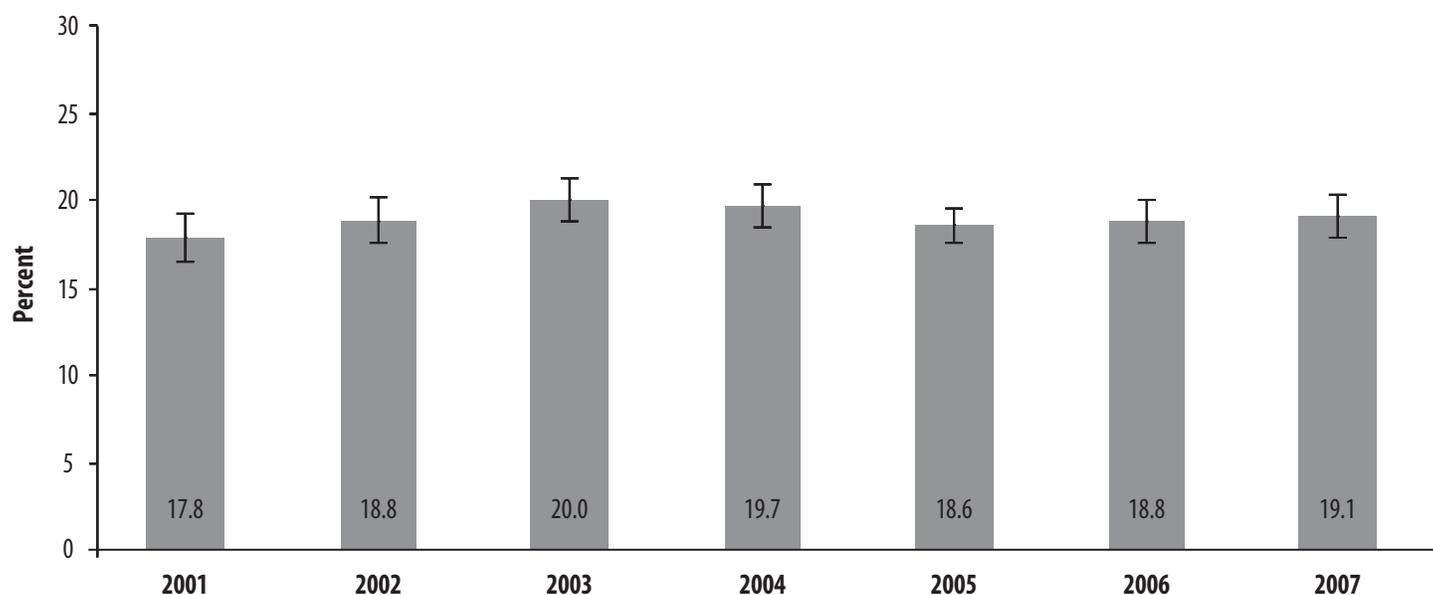
Crude prevalence of disability^a among New York State adults, by year



Note: Error bars represent 95% confidence intervals.

^a All respondents who report activity limitations due to physical, mental, or emotional problems OR have health problems that require the use of special equipment.

Age-adjusted^a prevalence of disability^b among New York State adults, by year



Note: Error bars represent 95% confidence intervals.

^a Age-adjusted to US 2000 population.

^b All respondents who report activity limitations due to physical, mental, or emotional problems OR have health problems that require the use of special equipment.

Prevalence of disability among New York State adults: 2007 BRFSS

	Overall disability ^a		Degree ^b of disability			
	% ^e	95% CI ^e	Need help ^c		Need no help ^d	
	%	95% CI	%	95% CI	%	95% CI
New York State (NYS) [n=6,419]	19.5	18.4-20.7	5.6	5.0-6.3	13.8	12.9-14.9
Sex						
Male	17.9	16.1-19.8	3.7	2.8-4.7	14.2	12.6-15.9
Female	21.0	19.5-22.5	7.4	6.6-8.4	13.5	12.4-14.8
Age (years)						
18-24	6.3	3.8-10.3	0.2	0.0-1.6	6.1	3.7-10.0
25-34	8.8	6.6-11.6	2.3	1.3-4.1	6.5	4.7-9.0
35-44	16.3	13.7-19.2	5.4	4.0-7.5	10.8	8.8-13.4
45-54	22.3	19.8-25.0	6.4	4.9-8.3	15.9	13.7-18.2
55-64	28.5	25.5-31.6	8.1	6.6-10.0	20.3	17.7-23.3
≥ 65	32.9	30.4-35.5	10.2	8.7-12.0	22.7	20.6-25.0
Race/ethnicity						
White non-Hispanic	20.6	19.3-21.9	5.3	4.6-6.0	15.3	14.2-16.5
Black non-Hispanic	18.9	15.2-23.1	7.4	5.2-10.3	11.5	8.7-15.1
Hispanic	17.5	14.2-21.4	6.0	4.2-8.5	11.5	8.8-14.8
Other non-Hispanic	16.3	12.4-21.0	5.1	3.2-8.0	11.2	8.0-15.3
Annual household income						
< \$15,000	37.9	32.3-43.8	17.2	13.6-21.6	20.6	16.8-25.0
\$15,000-\$24,999	28.0	24.2-32.2	8.0	6.1-10.4	20.0	16.7-23.9
\$25,000-\$34,999	20.1	16.8-23.8	6.2	4.4-8.5	13.9	11.3-17.1
\$35,000-\$49,999	17.9	15.1-21.1	5.5	3.9-7.8	12.4	10.1-15.0
\$50,000-\$74,999	16.1	13.6-19.1	3.7	2.6-5.4	12.4	10.2-15.0
≥ \$75,000	11.3	9.8-13.1	1.8	1.2-2.7	9.5	8.1-11.1
Missing ^f	21.4	18.1-24.2	5.9	4.4-8.0	15.5	12.6-18.9
Educational attainment						
Less than high school (HS)	23.3	19.2-28.1	9.1	6.8-12.1	14.2	10.8-18.4
High school or GED	23.9	21.5-26.4	7.6	6.3-9.3	16.2	14.2-18.4
Some post-HS	20.1	17.9-22.6	6.0	4.8-7.4	14.1	12.2-16.3
College graduate	14.7	13.2-16.3	2.8	2.2-3.7	11.9	10.6-13.3
Residence						
New York City (NYC)	16.5	15.6-19.9	5.3	4.2-6.7	12.3	10.6-14.3
NYS exclusive of NYC	20.4	19.1-21.8	5.8	5.1-6.6	14.6	13.5-15.8

^a All respondents who report activity limitations due to physical, mental, or emotional problems OR have health problems that require the use of special equipment.

^b Given a reported disability, status as needing help from others in activities of daily living.

^c Because of impairment or health problem, need help of other persons with personal care needs OR in handling routine needs.

^d Need no help of other persons either with personal care needs or in handling routine needs.

^e % =Percentage; 95% CI =Confidence interval (at the 95 percent probability level). Percentages are weighted to population characteristics.

^f "Missing" category included because more than 10% of the sample did not report income.

Order Information

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